

CHURCH REJECTS NEW KING JAMES BIBLE

March 12, 1996 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org) -

Pastor Dennis Gibson, Calvary Baptist Church, Brampton, Ontario, is a member of the Dean Burgon Society, and has written a number of papers in defense of the King James Bible. The following testimony was contained in a letter to me (David Cloud) dated April 19, 1995. I find Pastor Gibson's testimony refreshing. The man has been willing to take a stand for the truth all along the way in his Christian walk, regardless of the price.

"I am no expert, nor would I claim to be such. I have taken considerable Greek and Hebrew studies, and continue to read the Biblical languages on a daily basis. ... I tried to face this issue as it affected me as a pastor who must answer to God one Day for how I have handled the Word of life.

"I was born in Northern Ireland (Ulster) in December 1931, brought up in a typical Protestant home. My sisters and I were sent off to Sunday School and church (Presbyterian). There was little or no gospel message that I could remember. I came under conviction of sin at an early age (about 10 years old) in a Salvation Army meeting for children, but this experience was not fostered or encouraged at home. There was no interest in the true faith in my home or most of the homes around us. I forgot about that time when I wept my heart out at the 'Penitent [Room]' in that meeting, but God never forgets. We grew up into our teen years just as the World War II was ended. After my father's release from the air force, we moved to the city of Belfast in July 1945. God was going before, and we became attached to a Presbyterian Church where there were a number of saved people. At a Victory Mission in that church in November 1945, I gave my heart to the Lord and went on for some time, but with a lot of failures. In October 1949, there was another mission. I was now almost 18. I had become attracted to a fine Christian girl (now my wife of 41 years!). That night I surrendered my life to the Lord, and told God I was willing to do whatever He wanted of me. Shortly after that I began to study with a view to becoming a Presbyterian minister. This took me eventually to university and the Divinity College. Ordained in November 1958, I set out for Canada, now married and with two children. I sought to maintain my evangelical faith and struggled with the Canadian Presbyterian [denomination] which was becoming increasingly modernistic and ecumenical. I resigned from that ministry after ten years, when I had come to Baptist convictions. Unfortunately, I was soon encountering more and more compromise among my new Baptist brethren. How disconcerting to discover that they were not really Baptists at all. Any label would have suited just as well. During this time I also taught in Toronto Baptist Seminary for five years. I became pastor of my present congregation in 1973. Since then a number of 'battles' had to be fought. Some years ago (June 1990) we withdrew from the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches and became independent. We circulated our letter of withdrawal to all the Ontario churches, which was considered a hostile act by many. Our intention was merely to let it be known openly why we were withdrawing.

"The Lord has sustained us, and we are seeing the congregation grow slowly, but we trust, faithfully. The people who come are standing with me in the separated, fundamental position. I have taken some of our men through Dr. Waite's book on defending the KJV. One of my men has been doing a series on the versions and their errors at Wednesday Prayer Meeting. ... It is encouraging to see some young men also coming to grips with this and other issues and faithfully attending P.M. ...

"Like so many others, I became involved in the Bible Version issue when I read Fuller's book Which Bible?. This opened contact and correspondence with Dr. D.A. Waite. I attended my first DBS Annual Meeting in Louisville in 1989. I began writing at the request of Dr. Waite, and gave my first paper in Warren, Maine, in 1990. I can say that I thank God for the contribution of the DBS men to this fundamental struggle, and for their encouragement to me personally. ... We, at Calvary, Brampton, have the joy of hosting this year's Annual Meeting of DBS (July 12-13, 1995).

"One of our last battles revolved around the attempt to introduce the New King James Version by two young men who were studying at Central Baptist Seminary, Toronto. This was doubly sad for me for I had poured a lot of myself into those young men. We did prepare a resolution on the NKJV which was adopted.

"My knowledge on the state of the battle today is limited to my own small circle. For what it is worth, I SEE A REAL HOSTILITY THAT HAS BEEN GENERATED IN THE MINDS OF SOME OF THE YOUNGER PASTORS. There does not seem to be, on their part, a serious interest in dealing with this issue. It is better to let people make up their own minds. They, either willingly or ignorantly, see the issue as just a matter of translation. They think the newer versions read more smoothly. It doesn't seem to matter whether they are also accurate. It is the hostility, however, that is troubling. Sides are forming and deep prejudices are evident. To be 'a King James man' is now a term of opprobrium. This opposition is within 'so-called' evangelicalism, not as in the past, from the liberal-modernist camp. 'Truth is fallen in the street' (Isa. 59:14; Jer. 5).

"As for signs of encouragement, yes, for God is still on the Throne. He still has His remnant! He will yet vindicate His cause. Let us who are in this battle keep close to Him, and let our trust be in His promises. 'So that I may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me' (Heb. 13:6)" (Denis Gibson, Letter, April, 19, 1995).

The resolution mentioned by Pastor Gibson in regard to the New King James Version is very interesting, and since this is a question faced by many churches we want to print the entire statement:

WHEREAS: We are fighting a spiritual battle and the enemy of the souls of men has developed a spiritual climate where he can logically say 'HATH GOD SAID' and

WHEREAS: This is being accomplished by the proliferation of translations of Holy Scripture, all of which translations (the K.J.V. excepted) are based on the critical Greek text produced by Westcott and Hort for the 1881 Revised Version and

WHEREAS: These versions (R.V., A.R.V., R.S.V., N.E.B., et al) were seen by the evangelical Bible believers to be corrupt and dangerous to the faith, they were for the most part rejected in the strongest terms ... and

WHEREAS: Many evangelical Bible believers still rejected the further attempts to produce 'evangelical versions' such as the N.A.S.B. and the N.I.V., because these versions were also based on the same critical Greek text as the 'modernist versions' yet another attempt was made to reach those still holding to the K.J.V. by the production of the New King James Version (1982) and

WHEREAS: This version by using the K.J.V. and Authorized names gives the impression that it is just the K.J.V. 'brought up to date,' but since this is far from the case, this version may be an even more dangerous one than any other version to date, and

WHEREAS: THE EDITORS OF THE NEW KING JAMES VERSION CLAIM THAT THEY ARE FAITHFUL TO THE RECEIVED TEXT THAT LIES BEHIND THE OLD KING JAMES BUT IN FACT DEPART FROM IT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND INCLUDE FOOTNOTES FROM THE CRITICAL TEXTS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT and since in the preface (page vii) the editors clearly state that they 'make no evaluation of readings' and that these variants are 'produced for the benefit of interested readers representing all textual persuasions' they seem to clearly show that FAR FROM BEING SUPPORTERS OF THE R.T. OF THE K.J.V. THE EDITORS ARE IN FACT SEEKING TO BE 'NEUTRAL' AS TO WHAT THE WORD OF THE LIVING GOD REALLY IS, and

WHEREAS: A footnote system is used in the N.K.J.V. which footnote system the editors explained was to 'encourage further enquiry by readers' and to make it 'easier for the average reader to delete something he or she felt was not properly a part of the text than to insert a word or phrase which had been left out by the revisers' (N.K.J.V., page 1235) thus NOT ONLY SHOWING THAT THE WORD OF GOD WAS NOT YET SETTLED AND SURE FOR THE EDITORS BUT ALSO SETTING UP THE AVERAGE READER TO BE HIS OR HER OWN TEXTUAL CRITIC, and

WHEREAS: The N.K.J.V. is admittedly not yet in its final form, but will likely be revised even further in the years ahead, we still do not have the final form of what the editors consider to be the Word of God,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That we, the members of Calvary Baptist Church, Brampton, in our Annual Meeting on this day of our Lord, June 8, 1988, do hereby reject the

use of the N.K.J.V. in our pulpit and church school or any other activities where the Word of God is being taught and that we reaffirm our unswerving commitment to the K.J.V. (1611).

At her coronation, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II received a copy of the Authorized Version of the Bible (K.J.V. 1611) which was presented to her with these words, 'Here is Wisdom; here is the Royal Law; here are the Lively Oracles of God.' This is our firm belief and confidence: Here is the Word of God.

Some of the papers Pastor Gibson has written on the subject of Bible versions are Trifling with God's Word or Trembling at God's Word; The Good is Ever the Enemy of the Best; The Critical Text - the Scholar's Text - not God's; and Textual Criticism in the Pastoral Context: How It Impinges on Faithful Preaching (For Love of the Bible: The Battle for the King James Version and the Received Text from 1800 to Present, by David W. Cloud, copyright 1995, Way of Life Literature, 1219 N. Harns Rd., Oak Harbor, WA 98277).